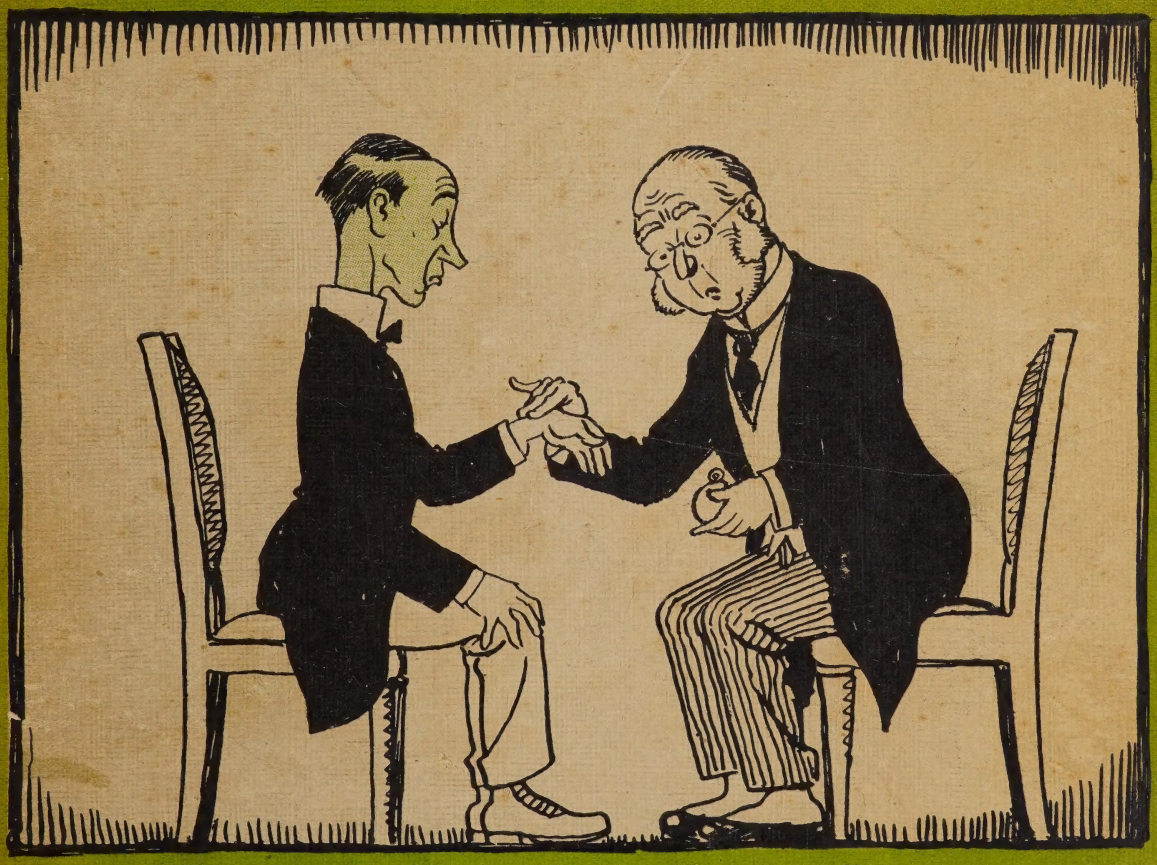
GEORGE MORROW
HIS BOOK



"NOTHING SERIOUS"

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

E. V. LUCAS

METHUEN & CO., LTD. LONDON

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GEORGE MORROW : HIS BOOK

THE CHESTNUT THROUGH THE AGES

GEORGE MORROW
HIS BOOK

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
E. V. LUCAS

METHUEN & CO. LTD.
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LONDON

First Published in 1920

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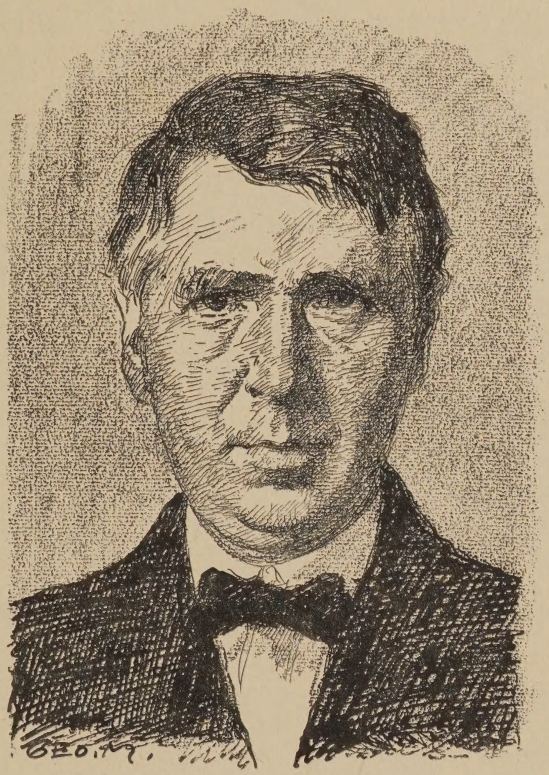
INTRODUCTION

I CONSIDER it a great honour to be associated with this book, for which for too long we have been waiting—" we " being all those people who rejoice in George Morrow's hand and brain and who open *Punch* backwards.

George Morrow needs no introduction, nor is it part of my scheme of life to impede the way to a joke. But certain biographical facts, which I have extracted from his uncommunicative pen demand to be put on record: such as, that he is fifty but is not proud of it; that he is Irish although born in Ulster; and that his favourite occupation is landscape painting in water-colours but he makes comic drawings because the other kind do not assist in solving the problem of living.



GEORGE MORROW
By Himself—1920.

He adds that he is "fond of travel but is prevented by the fear of luggage," and yet few men have travelled farther, for where others buy tickets and are uncomfortable on steamers, George Morrow flits about the ages, elvishly bringing with him from every journey a new and surprising side-light on the past. There are many such in this book, and ten times as many more among the mass of work from which this book has been selected, for it is our humorist's special prerogative to survey mankind from unexpected angles and to find yet one more jest in even the most overworked themes. Look for example at the scene in this volume from the childhood of Romulus and Remus. For centuries the wits have been funny about those brothers, but there was still this enchanting aspect of the case to be thought of—the babes on page eleven. And there is a new grown-up Romulus joke too. One feels that, despite their whimsicality, all these historical things happened.

Not only do we go to George Morrow for new facets that he can cut even on the oldest stone, but for the best accessory detail too. No humorist is so trustworthy as he. As I once wrote (and indulging in eulogy of George Morrow is one of the pleasures of life), "he scamps nothing and forgets nothing. Every part of the picture has had consideration. . . The commonest charge that is brought against many of our comic draughtsmen is that their drawings are 'so soon over.' It could never be urged against George Morrow, whose backgrounds work for their living too. This stealthy accumulative sense of the ridiculous is very rare."

One word about the technical quality of the workmanship, which gives me hardly less delight than its author's humour. Without ever distracting attention from the joke by any unduly emphatic line or effect, George Morrow seems to me to be one of the most adequate draughtsmen that we have. No one can better suggest atmosphere, whether indoors or out, and some of his landscapes and seascapes are perfect. Look at the gibbet scene on page thirty-five, and the sculptor's ocean on page eighty-seven. But it is in street scenes (of which this book contains too few—a defect to be remedied when a second collection is called for) that the master is at his mischievous best. George Morrow is, in my experience, the only artist in England to-day who draws Londoners as they are. If the city were razed to the ground and every record of its inhabitants lost, George Morrow could reconstruct them. You have but to look at the next crowd following the Guards' band to realise that he designed it.

E. V. LUCAS

September 1920

The artist's acknowledgments and thanks are due to the proprietors of "Punch" and "Land and Water" for permission to reprint his contributions in this volume.

GEORGE MORROW: HIS BOOK

MARGINAL NOTES ON HISTORY

Family Physician (to Cleopatra) : "AH ! WE'VE BEEN DRINKING PEARLS AGAIN, HAVE WE ?"

ASSYRIAN NUT, RETURNING TO TOWN, FINDS TO HIS HORROR THAT HE HAS BEEN GOING ABOUT ALL THE AFTERNOON WITH ONE ROW OF CURLS TOO MANY IN HIS BEARD

CALIGULA'S FAVOURITE HOLDS A RECEPTION

IN THE DAYS OF WRITING ON STONE

Besieged Citizen (to friend who has got hurt): "I HOPE IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS?"

Hurt Friend: "NO, THANKS, I SHALL SOON BE ALL RIGHT. IT WAS ONLY A LUMP OF PROPAGANDIST LITERATURE THAT THE ENEMY HAS BEEN PEPPERING US WITH THIS LAST DAY OR TWO."

Pygmalion: "This, my dear, is to be the finest thing I have ever done! . . It is to be my ideal of female loveliness.

Galatea: "Oh Pyggy Darling! Are you beginning to tire of me already?"

HOW HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

Sister Susie sewing shirts for Nessus

ORPHEUS AND THE HEDGEHOG

"For the sake of my reputation I must not give in. But this silly little beast is giving me more trouble than all the rest put together."

ON THE SHORE OF THE HELLESPONT

Hero: "Leander, dear, I wish you hadn't brought Fido! He is simply ruining my new frock."

Primeval Extortionist : "'Ere, wot's this ?"

THE GREAT INVENTORS

An architect of antiquity, commissioned to design an amphitheatre, takes a horse's hoof as a model for the auditorium

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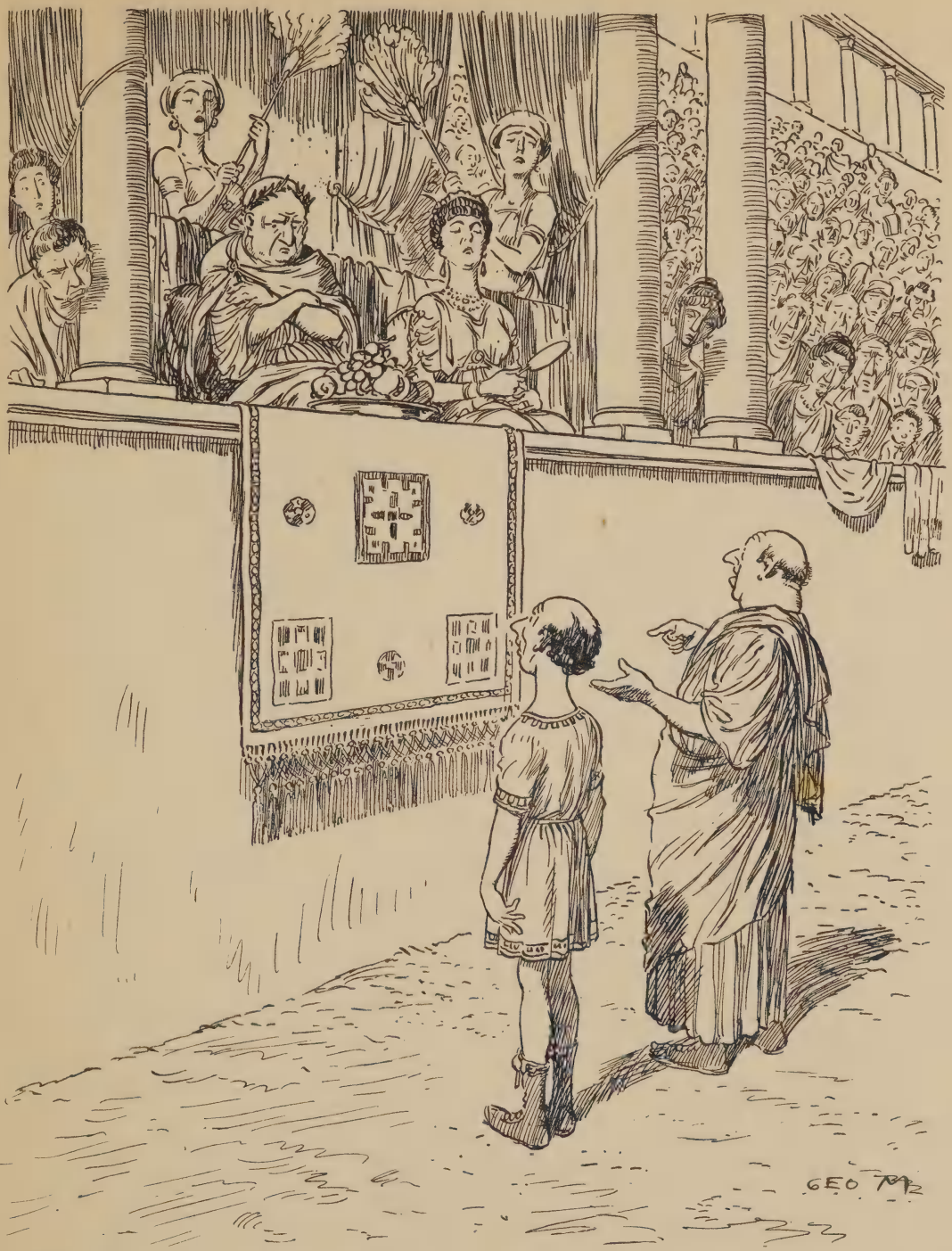
THE DOPED LION

A STORY OF ANCIENT ROME



Manager of Coliseum (Ancient Rome): "YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY, I REGRET THAT OWING TO THE SUDDEN INDISPOSITION OF BIBULUS TERTIUS, HIS COMBAT WITH THE TWO NUBIAN FOREST-BRED LIONS IS UNAVOIDABLY POSTPONED. WITH YOUR MAJESTY'S KIND PERMISSION THE TURN WILL BE TAKEN BY THE WELL-KNOWN BUCOLICUS CALSUS WHO WILL GIVE A FEW OF HIS WONDERFUL FARM-YARD IMITATIONS.

A PROBLEM

WHAT WOULD THE PRINCE HAVE DONE IF CINDERELLA'S SLIPPER HAD FITTED SOMEONE ELSE?

Eastern Potentate (rusticating): "YOU HAVE NO IDEA, MY DEAR FRIEND, HOW SOOTHING IT IS TO ME TO GET AWAY FROM THE LUXURIOUS AND ARTIFICIAL LIFE OF COURT, AND TO SPEND MY WEEK-ENDS IN QUIET RETIREMENT HERE IN THE COUNTRY, WHERE A FRIEND MAY DROP IN AND TAKE US IN THE ROUGH."

FORGOTTEN SPORTS

DASHING THE HABER. (FROM AN ILLUMINATED MISSAL IN THE LIBRARY OF THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF HABERDASHERS)

THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE

ROGER BACON CONSTRUCTS A WORKING MODEL OF A RAINBOW

SWINGING THE LEAD IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Benevolent Old Gentleman: "So you say you fought in the Hundred Years War, my brave man?"

The Veteran: "Yes, my lord—I joined up in the first week.

COMBING OUT IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The Official Torturer (applying for exemption): "I very much doubt if a substitute could be found, and I warn you, gentlemen, that inexpert treatment is sure to cause a feeling of unrest among the prisoners in the Royal Dungeons!"

Rescued Maiden: "Oh, Sir Knight, I would fain return to my bower. I have forgotten my tambour-frame!"

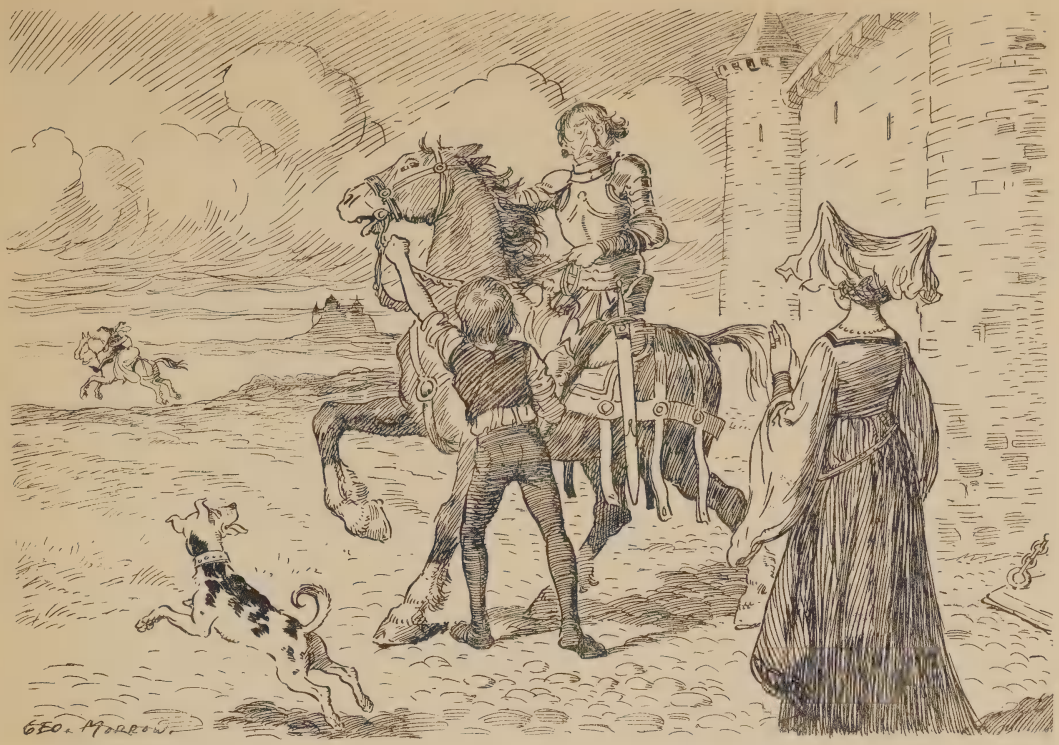
LITTLE WORRIES OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Consternation of Sir Aubrey, who findeth that "The Dragon-Slayer's Handbook" treateth not of Dragons with more than one head.

Gate-keeper at castle of unpopular Baron (to new grocer's boy) : "You silly idiot, why don't you go round to the tradesmen's gate? Good thing you didn't pull the bell or you'd 'ave got a 'alf ton of boiling lead on top of you—This is the *VISITORS'* door."

UNRECORDED ACTS OF KINDNESS

Alfred the Great presents his Master of the Bedchamber with an alarum



The Lady (leniently disposed; to her lord, who is setting off in pursuit of their daughter, who has eloped with the domestic fool): "DON'T KILL HIM. PERHAPS 'TIS ONLY ANOTHER OF HIS JOKES!"

Sir Hugh: "JOKE OR NO JOKE, HE NEEDN'T THINK HE'S GOING TO GET AWAY WITH ONE OF MY BEST HORSES."

The Sentimentalist: "THIS IS A LITTLE SURPRISE FOR YOU, MY PUISSANT LORD. TO-DAY IS OUR SILVER WEDDING AND I HAVE BROUGHT OUT THE FAITHFUL CHARGER WHO CARRIED US WHEN WE FLED TOGETHER FROM MY FATHER'S CASTLE. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE ROMANTIC IF WE RODE HIM TO-DAY AS WE DID THAT NIGHT!"

LITTLE WORRIES OF THE MIDDLE AGES

A KNIGHT OVERHAULING HIS STOCK OF DOUBTFUL COINS PRIOR TO A DISTRIBUTION OF LARGESSE

The Knight-errant (who has come, at great personal risk, to rescue an imprisoned damsel, suddenly changing his mind): "DO NOT BE ALARMED, DEAR LADY—I WAS JUST PASSING AND THOUGHT I WOULD LOOK IN. BY THE WAY, I'VE BROUGHT YOU A SKIPPING-ROPE—NO DOUBT YOU ARE IN NEED OF EXERCISE—GOOD-BYE!"

Horseman : "Who is going to be executed ?"
Roadmender : "It's Peterkin, the sorcerer."
Horseman : "Well, I suppose I'd better hasten, I've got a reprieve for him from the king."
Roadmender : "There's no hurry, Master—The executioners are on strike and a plumber has taken on the job."

The Man at Arms : "Are you wounded ?"
The Valiant Warrior (in a muffled voice) : "No. But I was foolish enough to count my enemies as I vanquished them, and bit my tongue saying 'three hundred and thirty-three'."

The Nobleman (*who is having a secret staircase made in anticipation of political troubles*) : "LOOK HERE, VARLET, YOU'VE MADE THIS STAIRWAY TOO NARROW ! MY WIFE CANNOT POSSIBLY USE IT ! "

The Varlet : " I'M SORRY, MY LORD—I MUST HAVE MADE A MISTAKE IN MY CALCULATIONS—SHOULD I WIDEN IT ? "

The Nobleman : " NO-NO—MAKE ANOTHER—I WILL KEEP THIS ONE. IT MAY BE USEFUL TO ME WHEN DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES ARISE."

Warrior (*to his comrade*) : " CONFOUND IT ! I AM JUST GETTING INTERESTED IN THIS BATTLE AND MY BRACES HAVE GIVEN WAY. RUN ROUND TO THE NEAREST OUTFITTER'S LIKE A GOOD CHAP AND GET ME A STRONG PAIR ! "

The Compounder of Magical Essences: "I FEAR THERE WILL BE GRIEVOUS DISCONTENT AT THE CASTLE TO-NIGHT. IN THE PLACE OF THIS LOVE-POTION, WITH WHICH SHE WAS TO WIN HER LORD TO HER AGAIN, I HAVE INADVERTENTLY SENT THE LADY A BALSAM FOR BUNIONS."

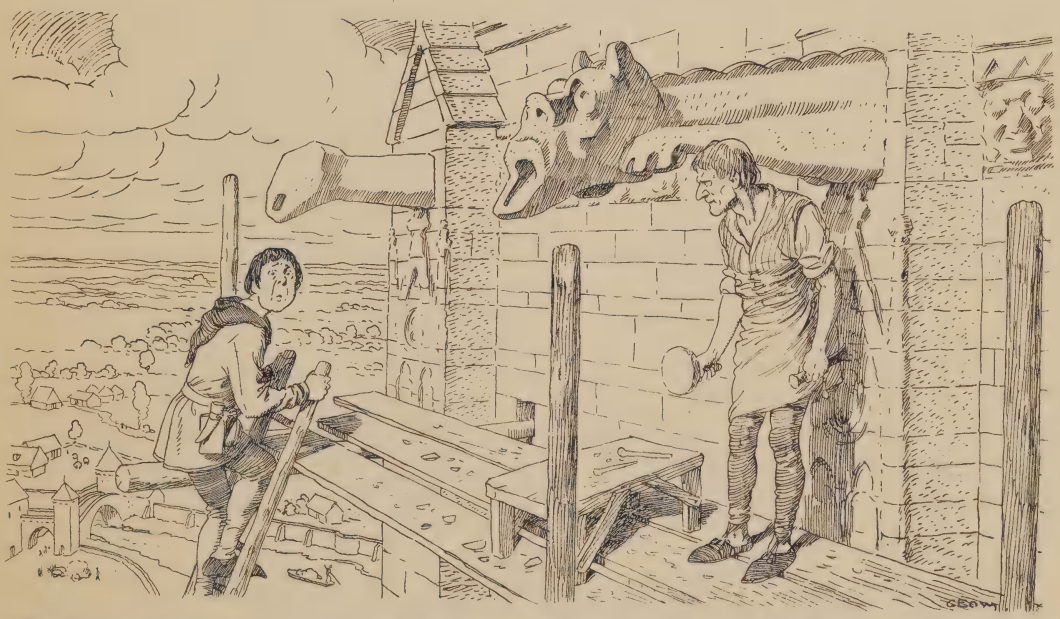
Amateur Wizard (apologetically to a friend whom he has inadvertently transformed into a rabbit while trying to charm away his warts): "I'M EXTREMELY SORRY, OLD MAN, BUT I'M AFRAID THERE IS A MISPRINT IN THE BOOK OF INSTRUCTIONS; AND I FIND IT TAKES THREE YEARS INSTEAD OF HOURS TO WORK OFF A SPELL OF THIS KIND. IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO IN THE MEANTIME?—A NICE CLEAN HUTCH, FOR INSTANCE?"

Primitive Husbandman (who is using a plough for the first time, and has lost the instructions) : "CONFOUND THESE NEWFANGLED INVENTIONS! I SHALL NEVER GET THROUGH THIS JOB!"

SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES IN EARLY TIMES

British Matron (whose husband has just had his weekly coat of woad, to visitor): "I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT MY HUSBAND CAN'T SEE YOU TILL HE'S DRY."

The Knight's Horse (after a busy day spent in liberating distressed damsels, and various other exploits) : "I WONDER WHAT THE —— FOOL'S GOING TO DO NOW!"



The Sculptor (cheerfully) : "AH, GOOD MORNING—I SUPPOSE YOU ARE THE MODEL I ENGAGED FOR THESE GARGOYLES?"

The Man on the Ladder : "NO, SIRRAH, I AM THE NEWLY APPOINTED CLERK OF THE WORKS!"

HISTORICAL BYWAYS

The Foster Mother: "I've done all I could, but that young Romulus *WILL* persist in walking on his hind legs!"

UNRECORDED HISTORICAL SCENE

Romulus hears from his contractor that Rome cannot be built in a day

Sympathetic Roman Lady: "WHAT ARE YOU CRYING ABOUT, LITTLE BOY?"
The Boy: "WE WERE PLAYING CIRCUS AND 'E PUNCHED MY NOSE!"
The Lady: "YOU SHOULD BE BRAVE—GLADIATORS DON'T CRY."
The Boy: "I WASN'T A GLADIATOR, LADY. I WAS A LION, AN' 'E WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A CHRISTIAN."

UNRECORDED ACTS OF KINDNESS

JULIUS CAESAR ALLEVIATES THE SUFFERINGS OF A WOUNDED SOLDIER BY READING HIS COMMENTARIES TO HIM

UNRECORDED HISTORICAL EMOTIONS

Nero: "DASH IT! THIS SMOKE'S A NUISANCE—I CAN HARDLY SEE THE MUSIC!"

AT THE GLADIATORIAL AGENCY

Manager: "BUT, MY DEAR SIR, YOU DON'T SEEM TO HAVE THE PHYSIQUE FOR AN ENGAGEMENT OF THIS KIND!"

Applicant: "THAT'S JUST IT. YOU SEE, I'VE BEEN RATHER POORLY FOR SOME TIME, AND MY DOCTOR ADVISED ME TO TAKE A TURN OR TWO IN THE ARENA FOR THE SAKE OF MY HEALTH."

THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE

SIR ISAAC NEWTON EXPLAINING THE LAW OF GRAVITATION TO GEORGE I.

EPISODES IN THE LIVES OF THE GREAT

BEAU BRUMMEL BUYS A CRAVAT

CRUEL SPORTS OF THE PAST
BREAKING THE CAMEL'S BACK

FORGOTTEN SPORTS
POPPING THE WEASEL

EXPLODED REPUTATIONS
WILLIAM TELL

EXPLODED REPUTATIONS
NIMROD

UNLIKELY SCENE AT A LABOUR EXCHANGE

OUT-OF-WORK POET PASSING THE INSPIRATION TEST BEFORE A SUPERVISING OFFICIAL OF THE BOARD OF TRADE

EXPLODED REPUTATIONS

"WILLIAM THE SILENT"

" HENRY,—I WISH YOU WOULD WRITE TO THE URBAN COUNCIL AND TELL THEM TO SEND A DUSTMAN WHO TURNS HIS TOES *in*—OUR ROCK BORDER IS BEING COMPLETELY RUINED ! "

Magistrate (after very narrow escape): " SPLENDID, MY BOY ! HOW DID YOU MANAGE, WHILE BEING DRAGGED ALL THAT DISTANCE, TO AVOID BEING DASHED TO PIECES BY THE ANIMAL'S LEGS ? "

Our hero : " I SAW IT DONE IN THE PICTURES, SIR ! "

Magistrate, who, on the bench, has constantly attributed all juvenile crimes to the Cinema, stands rebuked.

Castaway: "How did you ken I was here?"
Rescuer: "Wireless telephone—Heard a voice saying 'I'd give twenty pounds to get out of this rotten hole'."
Castaway: "Weel, yon telephone's defective; I said twenty shillin's."

THE TRAVELLING BORE

First Castaway: "A vessel in sight! We are saved!"
His Companion (who has been recounting his exploits on the links): "Yes, yes, it is quite possible. But to resume: there was a nasty bunker about half-way between the seventh and eighth holes, and I was feeling a bit nervous"—etc. etc. etc.

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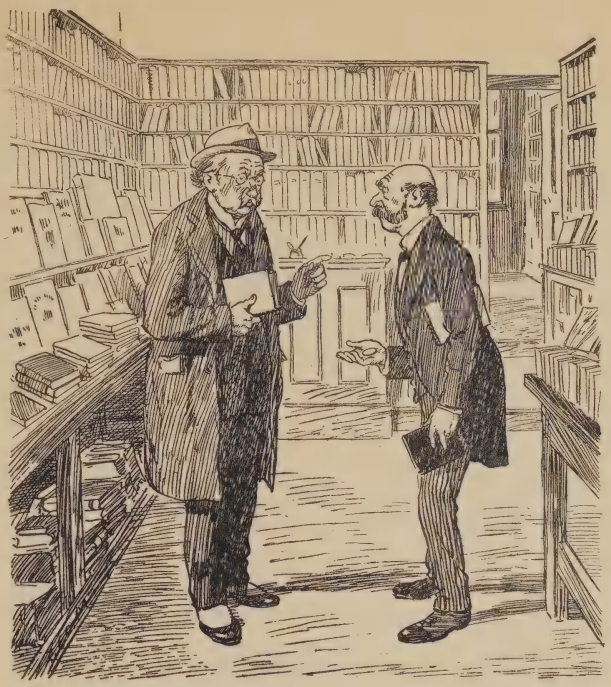


IN A BOOKSHOP

Customer (buying a dictionary) : "I HOPE THE WORDS ARE ARRANGED ALPHABETICALLY, FOR I'M USUALLY IN A HURRY WHEN I LOOK UP A SPELLING."

Possessor of magic ring (to his wife who has come to see the cause of the uproar) : "IT'S ALL RIGHT NOW, MY DEAR. IT WAS ONLY THE SLAVE OF THE RING. I FANCY HE WAS RATHER ANNOYED BECAUSE I BROUGHT HIM ALL THE WAY FROM BAGDAD TO FIND MY COLLAR STUD."

She : "WHAT A MAGNIFICENT SUNSET ! HOW IT LIFTS ONE'S THOUGHTS ABOVE THE EARTH !"

He : "AH, THAT REMINDS ME. YOU MIGHT SPEAK TO THE LANDLADY ABOUT OUR BACON IN THE MORNING. TELL HER I LIKE IT STREAKY."

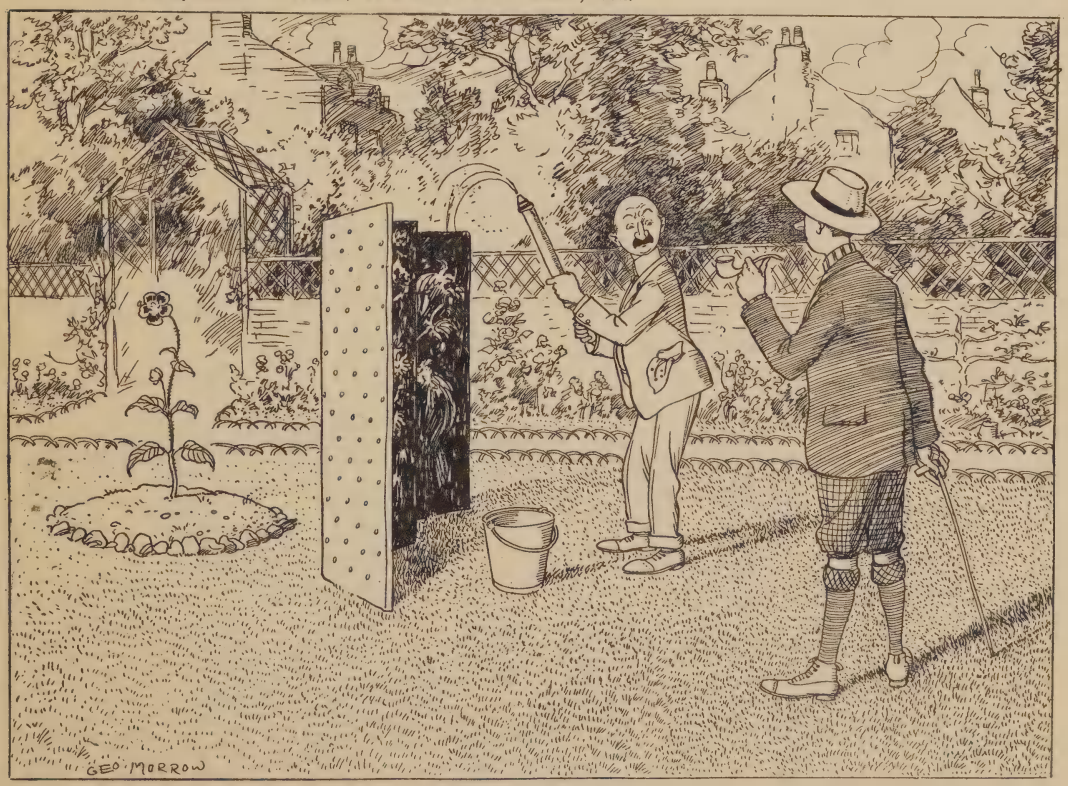
Professor (surprised by a picnic party, while bathing, suddenly inspired) : "GO AWAY ! I'M A DRYAD !"

Mr. Green: "It doesn't seem to me to look quite right."
Artist (engaged solely on account of the shortage of labour): "Well, sir, the panel was a bit on the long side, so I thought I'd spin the letters out to fill it up."

Wife of author (hearing the sound of a brow being slapped): "Oh, Harold! an inspiration?"
The author (sadly): "No, my dear, a mosquito."

THAT RESOURCEFUL HANDY MAN

Officer (*during an engagement*) : "WHERE ARE YOU GOING WITH THAT GLUE-POT, YOU —— IDIOT ?"
Handyman : "THE CAPTAIN TOLD ME TO NAIL THE COLOURS TO THE MAST, SIR."
Officer : "WELL ?"
Handyman : "WELL, IT'S A *STEEL* MAST, SIR."



A SENSITIVE PLANT

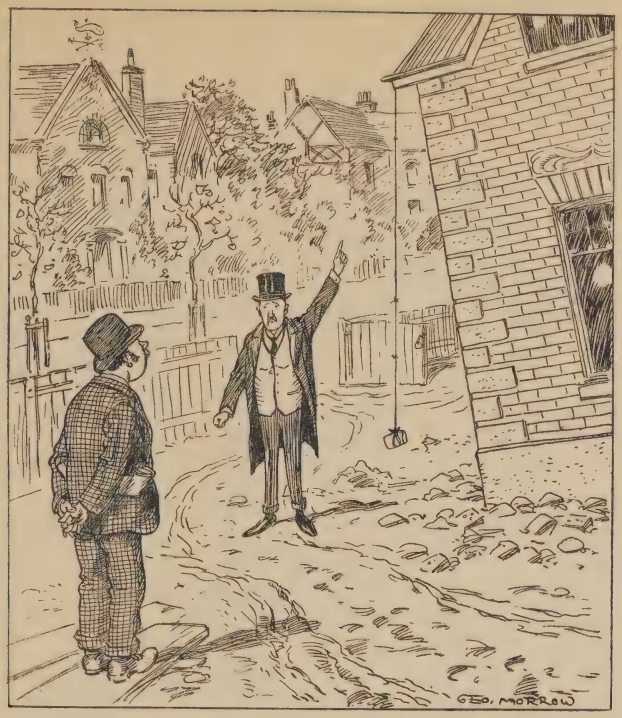
Friend of Amateur Gardener : "THAT SEEMS A CURIOUS ARRANGEMENT. WHAT'S THE SCREEN FOR ?"
A.G. : "SH-H ! IF THAT FLOWER KNEW THIS WASN'T REAL RAIN, IT WOULD'NT GROW ANOTHER INCH !"

Visitor : " YES, BUT WHAT'S THE POINT OF WHITEWASHING THE TREE TRUNKS ? "
Amateur Gardener : " I'M NOT QUITE SURE ; BUT I FANCY I'TS TO KEEP THE BATS FROM KNOCKING THEIR HEADS IN THE DARK."

Gentleman (who has just seen his portrait in the paper in connection with his testimonial to a patent medicine) :
" NOW, I WONDER IF THIS IS REAL LASTING FAME, OR ONLY A PASSING PHASE OF POPULARITY."

Tourist : " WE ARE NOW, MY DEAR, IN THE GREAT HALL, WHERE, ACCORDING TO THE GUIDE BOOK, THE FEUDAL LORDS DISPENSED RUDE JUSTICE TO THEIR TREMBLING SERFS AND QUAFFED THE RED WINE."
His prosaic wife : " OH, IT MUST HAVE BEEN LOVELY : BUT WHAT A PITY THE WALLPAPER HAS COME OFF ! "

" *Auntie Madge* " (*who writes the weekly letter to the Darling Kiddies in Mummie's Own Magazine*) : " NOISY LITTLE BEASTS ! I SHALL NEVER DO ANY DECENT WORK IN *this* ATMOSPHERE ! "



Angry Client: "THERE, YOU SEE THE HOUSE IS DISTINCTLY LEANING. I'VE FIXED THIS UP TO CONVINCE YOU."

Builder: "IT LOOKS AN OLD PLUMB-LINE. HAVE YOU HAD IT TESTED LATELY?"

IT IS PROPOSED THAT ARCHITECTURE SHALL ENJOY COPYRIGHT

Architect of Pomona Villas—West side (to Architect of Laburnum Villas—East side):
"HERE, YOU SCOUNDREL, YOU'RE INFRINGING MY COPYRIGHT!"

Disgusted Artist of advanced school who has had his picture neglected by the Twenty-first Century Society : " I CAN'T THINK WHY THE COMMITTEE REFUSED TO HANG IT. THE DRAWING IS ATROCIOUS AND THE COLOUR IS ABSOLUTELY—."

His Friend : " OH, I CAN UNDERSTAND IT EASILY. THE PICTURE IS PAINFULLY ACADEMIC —WHY, YOU'VE PUT FIVE TOES ON THAT FOOT ! "

DISGUST OF AN ARTIST ON FINDING HIS ACADEMY SUCCESS OF 1899 AT AN AUCTION OF MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES LEFT BEHIND IN RAILWAY CARRIAGES

When the Commission for the Shakespeare Statue is given out. Enterprising Artists' Models waiting to interview the Successful Sculptor

The Anti-tipping League holds its annual dinner

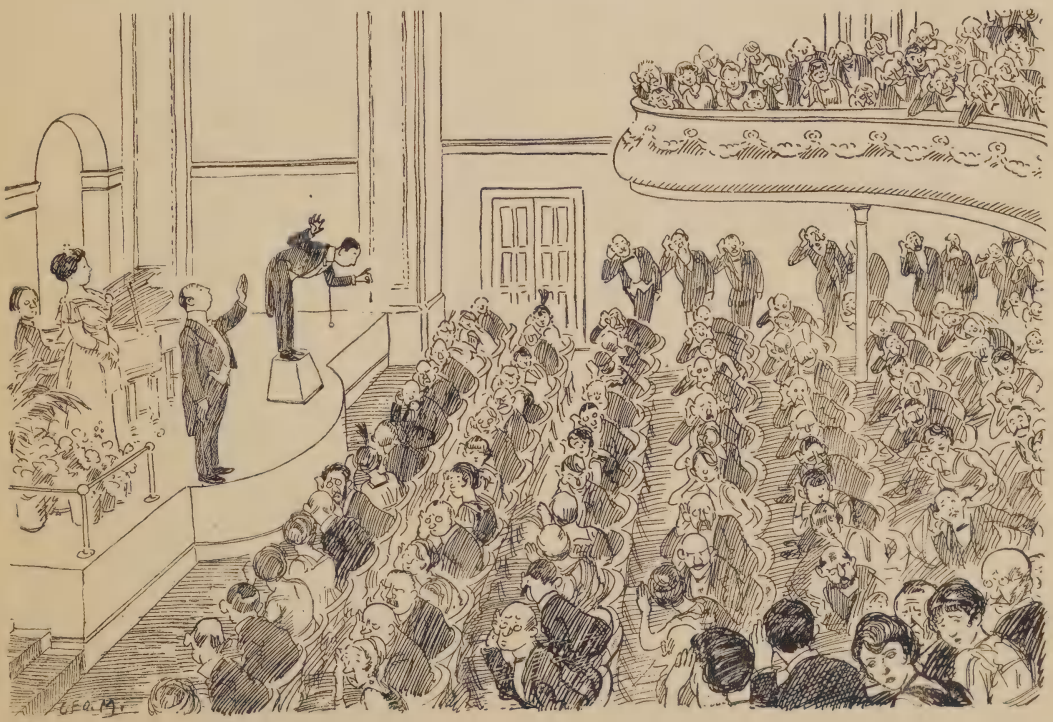
G I

New Sports for Old—Snail-Stalking in the Suburbs

This picture illustrates the deadly struggle which goes on daily between rival seaside resorts. It represents a party of hirelings in the pay of Wobblethorpe-on-Sea engaged in running up the rainfall of Little Blinkington

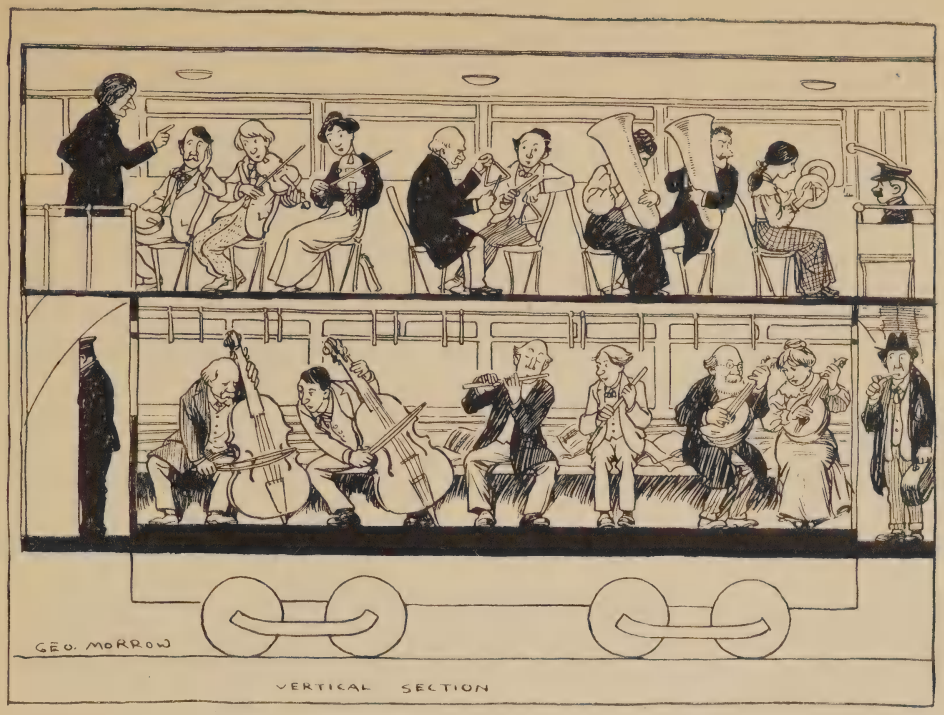
Extract from Guidebook "The Steamers pass so close to the Island of Havers that a biscuit can easily be tossed ashore from the deck."

Fancy Picture of the inhabitants of Havers, whose means of subsistence depend on the curiosity of tourists to test the accuracy of the guidebook.



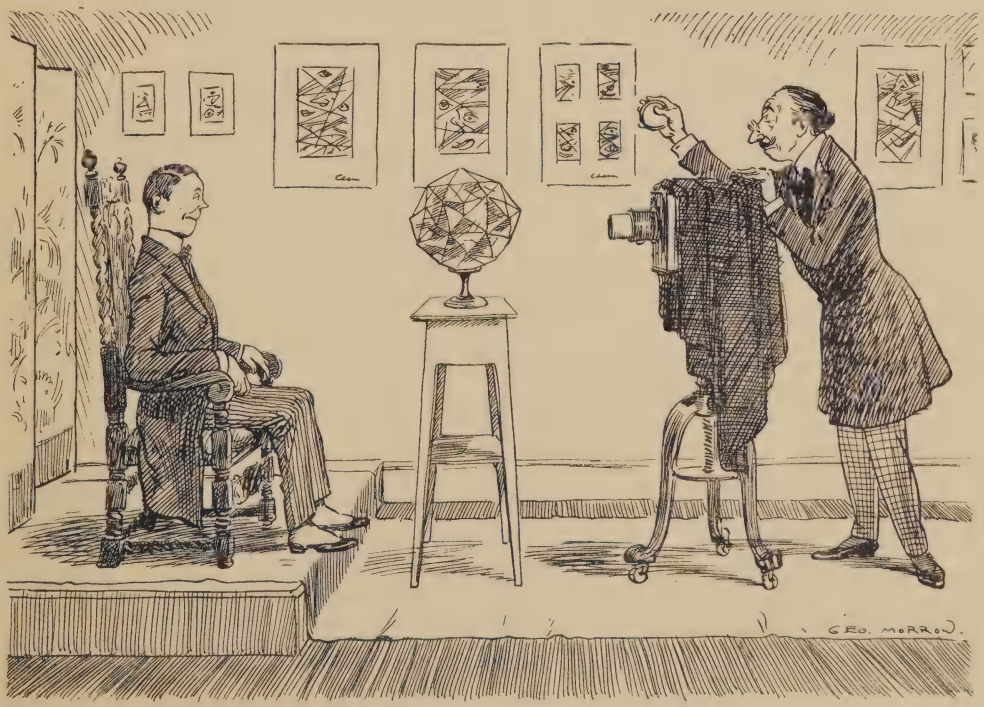
TESTING THE HUSH

Dropping the pin in the supreme moment before a great soprano's opening note



OUR UNTRUSTWORTHY ARTIST IN LONDON

STUDENTS OF THE GUILDHALL SCHOOL OF MUSIC, HAVING A MORNING LESSON IN AN L.C.C. TRAMCAR ON THE EMBANKMENT



THE CUBIST PHOTOGRAPHER

THE WORLD'S WORKERS

THE SHOP-WALKERS' CLASS AT HARRIDGE'S TRAINING FARM

A WORLD'S WORKER

LADY OF TITLE TAKING LESSONS IN BUILDING CONSTRUCTION PRIOR TO PERFORMING THE CEREMONY OF LAYING A FOUNDATION STONE

THE BRILLIANTINE COMMITTEE OF A SMART WEST-END TOILET CLUB DISCUSSING THE MERITS OF A NEW HAIR-WASH

FANCY PICTURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE WHICH DECIDES THE FASHIONS FOR NEXT SEASON

BEHIND THE SCENES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

MUNICIPAL INFLATOR PREPARING A COACHMAN FOR AN IMPORTANT PUBLIC FUNCTION

ANOTHER WORLD'S WORKER

THE ARTIST WHO PAINTS THE BLACK HALVES IN "RESTORED" PICTURES

THE REVIVAL OF A DYING ART

NEW CLASS FOR SCREEVERS (PAVEMENT ARTISTS) IN THE L.C.C. SCHOOL OF ARTS AND CRAFTS

SCULPTOR, MODELLING A WAVE FROM LIFE, FOR A WELL-KNOWN LADIES' HAIRDRESSER

UNKNOWN LONDON

EXPULSION OF A MEMBER FROM A FASHIONABLE WEST-END CLUB

UNKNOWN LONDON

CONDUCTORS OF UNDERGROUND RAILWAYS LEARNING THE MISPRONUNCIATION OF THE NAMES OF STATIONS

UNKNOWN LONDON

INVENTORS WAITING TO INTERVIEW WAR OFFICE AUTHORITIES

OUR CURIO CRANKS

THE MAN WHO TAKES IMPRESSIONS OF THE FOOTPRINTS OF FAMOUS AUTHORS

OUR CURIO CRANKS

THE MAN WHO COLLECTS MUD SPLASHES FROM THE WHEELS OF THE EXALTED GREAT

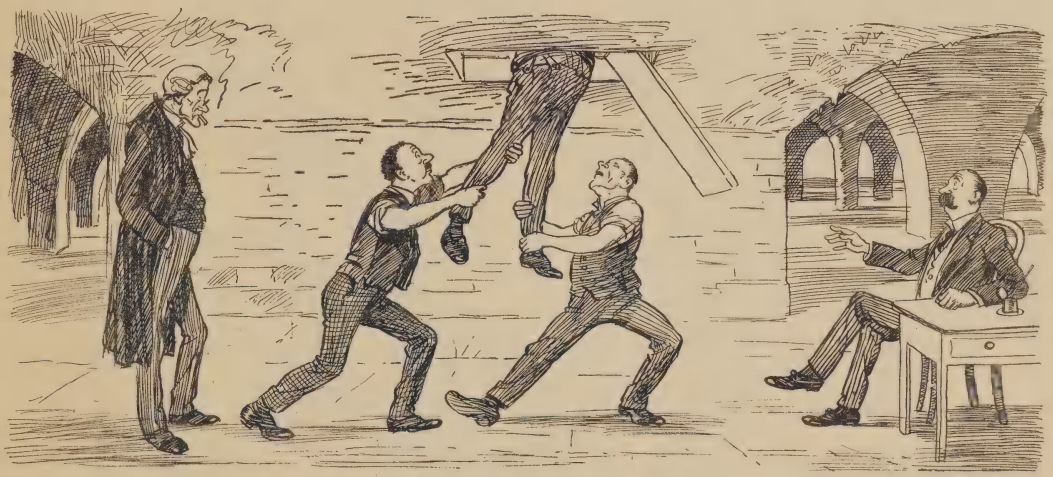
THIS KIND OF THING OCCURS SO OFTEN—

THAT IT WOULD BE A PLEASURE TO SEE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WITH A REALLY SOLID PEDESTRIAN

UPB

UNKNOWN LONDON

BACK ENTRANCE TO A LARGE WEST-END EMPORIUM. SHOP ASSISTANTS SUFFER A REACTION FROM THEIR CUSTOMARY DIGNITY



UNKNOWN LONDON

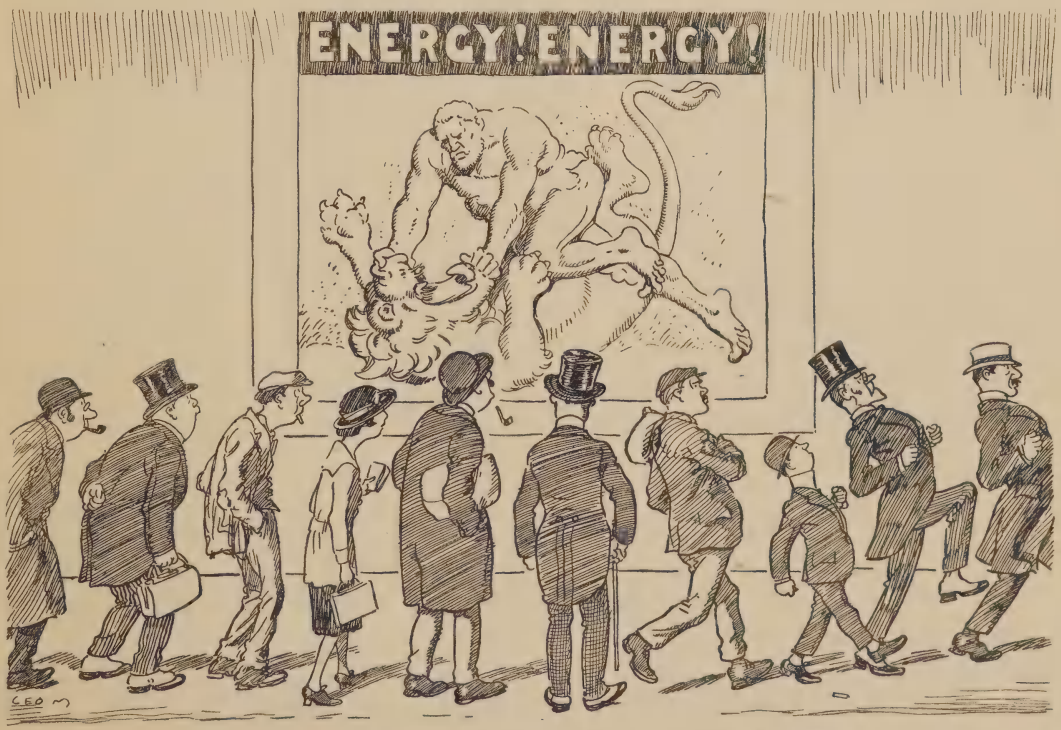
THE CATACOMBS IN THE LAW COURTS—WITHDRAWING A JUROR

UNKNOWN LONDON

BRITISH MUSEUM OFFICIALS REFUSING TO ACCEPT A COLLECTION

AN HONOURED VISITOR

ARRIVAL OF AGED CHEESE JOKE AT THE OFFICES OF A COMIC PAPER.



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